

# Aikido at the Center

## News

August 2009 Issue

*“Aren't we privileged to live in a time when everything is at stake, and when our efforts make a difference in the eternal contest between the forces of light and shadow, between togetherness and division, between justice and exploitation? Oh, be joyful that you are a warrior in this great time!...Will we rise to this battle? If so, we cannot lose, for rising up to it is our victory . . . If we represent love in the world, you see, we have already won.” – Doris "Granny D" Haddock from her 93rd birthday speech*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>
August 16th	9:00 am	Advanced Class
August 31st	5:30 pm	Brown Belt Testing
September 2nd	5:30 pm	Brown Belt Testing

**REMINDER: DON'T FORGET TO PAY YOUR DUES!  
THANKS!**

## **AIKIDOKIDS!**

### **Pasqua Yaqui Summer Camp**

The Yaqui Summer Program is going well. We have one little girl in our program who enjoys being in my line. She is always the first one to be in my line when we say get into 2 or 3 lines because I think she enjoys throwing me when we are doing techniques! I really appreciate everyone who has volunteered their time to help Claire and I with the Yaqui summer program. I especially want to thank Manny for coming all the way from Rio Rico to help us out. Great Job everyone. Claire and I could not of done it without everyone's help.

~submitted by Joe

### **BROWN BELT TESTING**

On Monday, August 31st and Wednesday, September 2nd we'll have brown belt testing. We should have 3 or 4 people testing. Please come out and support them!

### **OUR AIKIDO COMMUNITY—UPDATE**

Dr. John Porter, fondly known as “Dr. John” at our dojo, now has the rank of sandan. He tested on July 31st. Congratulations Dr. John!!

### **ARTICLE BY LISA JENSEN**

What would O-Sensei do?

(a bumper sticker in the making!)

Six-year old Solomon, one of our amazing aikido kids, was reading a church newsletter with his mom Sky, one of our amazing aikido adults. The Unitarian Universalist newsletter had an article about the teachings of Jesus, and Sky was asking her children what they thought of the teachings.

One of the things Jesus said was, “If a man strikes you on the cheek, turn to him the other cheek.” Sky asked her kids, “Do you think you would do that? If someone hit you, would you let them hit you on the other side?” Solomon thought and thought,

and finally shook his head, saying, "I don't think that's what O-Sensei would do."

## FOOD BANK DRIVE

Robinson Sensei and Karma will be collecting canned food for our community food bank on the first week of every month. The food bank is getting low due to the increase in people who need help with food. Even bringing in one can will help. Sensei and Karma will then deliver our food to the food bank drop off spot. Thanks to all of your support!

## ASK THE YUDANSHA

**\*I did not get a question for this month\***

Here are some quotes about ukemi--

"O' Sensei's instructions on ukemi to Saotome Sensei (from Principles of Aikido)"

1. Do not try to anticipate what is to come. An overcalculating mind will obscure the body's responses and cause it to lag. This will force you to take unnatural ukemi, which in turn will be reflected in technique training, hindering your improvement.
2. Observe your partner's movement and catch his intention. This is part of ukemi training.
3. Do not forget the relevance of ukemi training to everyday life. All prominent people who achieve something of value in everyday life have absorbed the principles of ukemi. The journey through life is beset by many hardships. Success comes to those who resolve their difficulties with the flexibility and openmindedness of ukemi. Those who force their ukemi in an unnatural manner in practice will see no positive results from their training in their life.
4. It is simple wisdom to avoid injury and strive for the goal of your choice, whether in the dojo or in everyday life.
5. An open and supple mind, a flexible body, modesty, and sincerity—these are the necessary elements in the art of ukemi. Without them, ukemi training fails. Without ukemi, waza training will never come to fruition.

"...in short, uke is responsible for creating the conditions that allow nage to

learn. If uke has no sense of the effects of a technique, no resilience, or no responsiveness to nage's movements or if he is fearful or awkward at falling, nage will not be able to study the techniques effectively...Developing good ukemi is the shortest path to acquiring skill in Aikido." Saotome Sensei

"In Japanese, the word nage means "to throw," and the word uke means "to accept." The nage is the one who gets to throw the uke, who agrees to be the fall guy. The uke has to accept the basic premise that whoever attacks is already defeated; by attacking, he has already lost. You learn more in aikido as an uke rather than as a nage, because you learn to accept what is going to happen to you with full commitment." Terry Dobson, It's a Lot Like Dancing...an Aikido Journey.

## THURSDAY WEAPONS CLASS

Every Thursday night from 5:30-6:30 pm we will have a combined beginning and advanced weapons class. Ted will teach any beginner's and Sensei will teach any advanced students.

Keep in mind that all kyu tests involve a demonstration of weapons proficiency. We have some time before the Monday and Wednesday classes, but that is not really enough time to develop your weapons skills. Try to make it to the weapons class as often as possible.

## SATURDAY OPEN MAT

Saturday mornings from 8:00-9:00 am we'll have open mat for everyone. One of the yudansha will be at the dojo at 8:00 am to be in charge of the open mat. You must be at the dojo at 8 if you want to train. If no one is there then the person in charge may leave.

Open mat is a time available for you to practice whatever you need to practice. You can work on open hand techniques, ukemi, or weapons. It's a great time to practice for your next test. Open mat works best if you have something in mind to work on and if you have someone to work with. You can always ask another student or an

advanced student to come in and work with you.

## ADVANCED CLASSES

Advanced class takes place on the first and third Sunday of each month at 9:00 am and is now open to anyone. Keep in mind that we will still practice advanced techniques and ukemi. If you feel comfortable you are welcome to attend this class. Try it and see if it's something you'd like to add to your training schedule!

## MESSAGE FROM SENSEI

*Greetings!*

*Over the summer, in our AikidoKids! program, and also at Yaqui, we are discussing the Eight Virtues of Budo. We have a general discussion on Monday and on Wednesday a talking circle at which each person present tells about what that virtue means to him or her. As you know, as we fold our hakamas at the end of class we are supposed to meditate on the Eight Virtues, one for each pleat. They are - Truth, Bravery, Compassion, Courtesy, Sincerity, Loyalty, Discernment and Faith. Some are obvious for samurai; bravery, loyalty are clearly battlefield virtues. But what about the others? Why are Faith and Compassion and Discernment important to warriors? Perhaps it's because the lord/daimyo/shogun/leader needed to know exactly who he could count onto fight on his side; it was literally a matter of life and death. So this code evolved, describing the characteristics of someone who lived an honorable life and could be counted on to behave in an honorable manner. And so the Eight Virtues of Budo still have meaning today, teaching us how to be people who can be counted on. People of Honor.*

Blessings,

Sensei